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AEW All Out Review: A Mixed Bag



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On a hot and humid Saturday night in Florida, AEW put on the second All Out. Going into this Pay-Per-View, there was an average go-home show. Some matches on the card had better build-ups and anticipations than others. Other than a couple of matches, All Out felt like an addendum to Dynamite. Something else that was notable — no Cody match. His matches have a certain style of booking, and you could feel his absence on the show. Not taking anything away from Dustin Rhodes' promo, which was one of the better parts of All Out.

So, let's address the elephant in the room. No, the Matt Hardy vs. Sammy Guevara match should have not continued. It was a scary spot to begin with. Hardy missed the second table and hit his head on the concrete. Aubrey Edwards threw up the x twice — that should have been the match. You can run it at a different time once Hardy recovers.

With all the concern of concussions in sports, air on the side of extreme caution. Hardy was out for almost a minute and under no circumstance should a wrestler be able to make the call to continue. Especially because Hardy and Guevara did another high climb afterward. We've all watched NFL games where concussion protocol takes a considerable amount of time. There was no way that the doctor could make an on-the-spot assessment for a concussion. I hope that AEW makes alterations on these protocols and high-risk spots. Once this match was over, it took the wind out of All Out. Nothing felt the same after that.

I am thankful that they included both of the women's' matches on the main card. It would have been a shame otherwise because Swole vs. Baker was the women's' division program with the most storyline progression to it. The cinematic match was fine. I understand that they did it this way because Britt Baker got cleared and did not have much ring time to get ready for a full match. Having this in a dentist's office mixed with some comedy was a good touch. It gave AEW women's' matches a bit of variety. Big Swole winning was the right call.

Hikaru Shida vs. Thunder Rosa was one of the best matches of the evening, and I'm happy that they gave it time. Rosa impressed fans on Wednesday and this one of the better singles matches from Shida in a bit. If I were Tony Khan, I would work out a larger deal with Billy Corgan and have Rosa on the show as long as NWA is on hiatus. They could also bring other NWA wrestlers in like Allysins Kay and Kamille.

With Omega/Page vs. FTR, if you cut that down about 5–10 minutes, the match would have been more effective. They told the story of Omega's knee being worked on, Page making a comeback, and FTR using their older style. You can have Omega hitting the V-Trigger on Page, then FTR beating Page with one spiked pile driver. I understand what they were trying to do with two of them, but it lessens the impact on what happened with Omega.

The Casino Battle Royale was much like the other ones. There were a lot of things going on at once, and it was hard to follow at points. Sometimes, the camera would miss some eliminations. Sorry to Matt Sydal — hopefully, he gets a singles match to redeem himself from the botch. Darby Allin took another crazy bump because it's a day that ends in y.

MJF vs. Moxley was better than I expected. MJF's offense was more akin to basic wrestling, and it devolved once he went outside. From there, Moxley beat MJF bloody until they focused on his arm. Commentary focused and played up MJF's toughness to hang in there with Moxley. Now, I'm not sure if you want to do this while a pandemic is still ranging, but MJF's blood found it's way into Mox's mouth. The finish would hint that this rivalry will resume at some point.

Ultimately, All Out left me with a lot more questions than answers.

1. Where does Chris Jericho and Orange Cassidy go from here? Their best of three was entertaining and in Jericho's words, this was to lift OC to main event status? Do you then make Cassidy a contender for the TNT or AEW championship? TNT may be more logical because there's a heel champion.
2. As Kenny Omega was exiting the arena, The Young Bucks met him to talk him out of leaving Hangman Page behind. It was weird because that's what they did after he cost them a chance at the Tag Team in his dismissal from The Elite. Now, you have two gimme programs culminating at Full Gear: FTR vs. The Young Bucks for the titles. Hangman Page vs. Kenny Omega. With Page on the outs from The Elite, he got what he wanted earlier in the year — just not in how he thought. AEW tried to bill him as one of their top single stars at the beginning of the promotion's inception, but it didn't go over. Now, you make him the babyface that overcomes rock bottom and possibly reward that with the title down the line. With Omega, many fans have wanted him to return to that "Cleaner" aura that he had. A heel turn would be better for his character and give him an edge.
3. The curious case of the AEW Championship. On Dynamite, Wardlow did the most damage to Moxley. He also inadvertently cost MJF the match — notably that tossing the ring was one of the few times he got involved. AEW has been teasing distention between these two here and there. Do you risk splitting them up now or do you just get Wardlow in more singles matches? Also, MJF has a case against Moxley because he used the Paradigm Shift. That's a way that you can make a rematch between those two.

For Moxley, he won the AEW Championship at Full Gear last year. Some of his reign got upended because of the pandemic. He hasn't lost a singles match all year and Lance Archer is next in line. If Lance Archer were to lose against Moxley, he would have lost both opportunities at the AEW and TNT titles. AEW has to make a decision — if you're building up Lance Archer as a big signing, a la Brodie Lee, you might have to make a switch.

4. It's time to build up a challenge for Hikaru Shida that is actually signed on the AEW roster. You have two months until Full Gear. Britt Baker is back. They have Big Swole, Nyla Rose, etc. Shida's storyline cannot be, "I'm calling on all comers," and that not happen. Fans are interested in the women's' division after Saturday. Cultivate and deliver a good storyline that elevates the AEW women's' championship. The time is now.

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